

**LOWER JOHN DAY AREA COMMISSION
ON TRANSPORTATION (LJDACT) MEETING MINUTES
MEETING HELD MAY 1, 2017 AT 10:00 AM
BOB'S TEXAS T-BONE RESTAURANT
101 MAIN STREET RUFUS OR 97050**

In Attendance:

Gary Thompson	Sherman County Judge, LJDACT Chair
Rod Runyon	Wasco County Commissioner
Dave Anderson	City of The Dalles Public Works
Dale McCay	City of The Dalles City Engineer
Brad DeHart	ODOT, The Dalles Project Delivery
Kathryn Greiner	City Condon Administrator
Dewey Kennedy	Gilliam County
Mike Weimar	Gilliam County Commissioner
Peter Mitchell	Port of Arlington Port Manager & Rail Representative
Chuck Covert	Columbia Gorge Regional Airport
Arthur Smith	Wasco County Public Works
Nate Stice	Regional Solutions
Scott Langer	WSDOT SW Region
Bill VanAntwerd	WSDOT SW Region Maintenance Superintendent
Pat Cimmiyotti	ODOT, The Dalles District Manager
Lynn Morley	Wheeler County Judge
Bill Potter	City of Fossil Public Works
Brenda Snow Potter	Wheeler County Finance & Admin, LJDACT Secretary
Gary Farnsworth	ODOT Region 4 Bend
Joni Bramlett	ODOT Region 4 Transit
Theresa Conley	ODOT Region 4 Transit Coordinator
Joel McCarroll	ODOT Region 4 Traffic Manager
Michael Duncan	ODOT Bend
Rich Eberle	Mid-Columbia Council of Governments
Jon Asher	Wheeler County Transportation

Telephonically - Susan Morgan

1. Call to Order and introductions
2. LJDACT Business
Correction to minutes requested by R. Runyon – remove Sherman from his title
Motion made by C. Covert and seconded by P. Mitchell to approve the minutes with corrections. Vote passed unanimously.
3. May 18 Update to Oregon Transportation Commission-Gary Farnsworth
 - A. Update the Charter – draft was provided in the meeting packet
 - B. Check the roster and membership, alternates, etc.
 - C. Support for the draft report that will be taken to the Transportation Commission
 - D. Who is willing to go to Salem in May to participate in the meeting
 - a. Gary Thompson, Mike Weimar, and Lynn MorleyMotion made by P. Mitchell and seconded by D. Anderson to appoint the representatives as noted. Vote passed unanimously.

Letter from Mr. Garrett was reviewed. The standard ACT questions are:

1. ***What does this balance look like in your area of the state?***

G. Thompson stated that maintenance is number one. There is no need to expand but there is need to maintain what is currently available.
A. Smith the OACES group firmly believes the maintenance and preservation of the present system is a priority but there are key bottlenecks that need to be addressed as an expansion.
R. Runyon spoke to the OACES formula in small rural counties and distribution of funds.
G. Farnsworth summarized the comments made. Is the funding being equitably distributed to maintain the system?
A. Smith referred to the 50/30/20 split and the 30% distribution formula.
G. Farnsworth asked if resources are being shared effectively and what can be done to make this better.
Discussion followed regarding maintenance issues and the fix-it funding.
2. ***What are the key opportunities for transportation investments to help with economic development in this part of the state?***

Improvements need to continue on 97 through to the California border. Maintenance will enhance the tourism opportunities.
Ag production is approximately 100 million dollars in Wasco County. The crops are transported on farm to market roads. This is critical.
The ability to partner up on projects needs to be made easier in the political arena. There are too many restrictions on who can work together. The scope of work dictates how it is contracted out and how the work must be done.
The City of Condon cannot get anyone in to pave.
The few available contractors are overwhelmed with the volume of work.
Limitations in paving projects were discussed.
3. ***What is an appropriate and effective role for ACTs in an era of limited fund? What activities can the ACT engage in to help inform the department's work?***

Inter-model needs and safety were discussed. Waste Management continues to grow. As the population grows, waste grows.

G. Farnsworth paraphrased everyone's answers and feedback.

G. Farnsworth asked for questions or concerns regarding the report.

Transportation Projects on page 3 of 4. One line for Gilliam County needs to be removed.

Charter Discussion –

Alternates do have the ability to fill in and must be identified by the voting members. If the voting member and the alternate are present at the same meeting, only the voting member may vote but if only the alternate is present, the alternate may vote.

Ex-officios are non-voting members. MCCOG could be the changed at any time.

The position of Chair was discussed.

Wasco County formalized their representation through their board. This would be G. Farnsworth's recommendation. B. DeHart stated that it would be a good process for the cities to do as well.

Roster Discussion -

A bike ped representative is still needed. B. Osborn is not able to attend future meetings. G. Farnsworth recommended Michael Duncan and David Amiton look into an idea for a representative to recruit.

B DeHart is still looking into potential marine representatives.

Motion made by M. Weimar and seconded by (?) to approve the draft charter and report as shown and edited to go forward to the Commission. Vote passed unanimously

4. 2017 Legislative Session Update- Susan Morgan

G. Farnsworth stated that he had the article in the Oregonian to refer to if needed.

S. Morgan asked if the ACT was briefed on what is going on in the Transportation Funding discussion so far.

G. Farnsworth explained that nothing had been discussed since January.

S. Morgan went on to explain the joint committee. This committee has been broken out into several work groups relating to the various aspects of transportation.

The highway road preservation, maintenance and seismic upgrade workgroup has taken a look at the needs across the state. They have a general agreement on the OACES proposal. This proposal addresses the lack of funding for low vehicle registration- high road mile counties. The state appropriation is currently based on the number of vehicles registered. The proposal is to take 5 million dollars off the top of the counties' share of any new revenue that comes out of this legislative discussion and reallocate it to counties based on the number of road miles. Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler, Harney, Morrow, and Wallowa are all going to benefit from this. This proposal has not come into any opposition. Road jurisdictions and project efficiencies have also been discussed.

The public transportation and public safety workgroup is working on improving transit. This group recommended that there be a payroll tax put in place. This would be a tax paid by individuals who got paychecks across the state. It would be a tax at .0001 % of payroll. They estimate that this would generate over a 100 million dollars a year. The money would be redistributed into the regions that paid it. They discussed a distribution formula that 85% of the funds generated would go back to transit districts and counties and tribes to provide services. They would have a grant fund on top of that. They also talked about safe roads to school programs and dedicating current revenue from the state highway funds to take care of safe roads to schools.

The multi-modal freight workgroup has been talking about aviation, ports, marine and rail. They focused on Connect Oregon. They are concerned about the two ballot initiatives that were passed by the citizens that take chunks of funding out of lottery funds. They propose a tax on aggregate that would be paid by all entities that use aggregate. The revenue would be part of the funding for Connect Oregon. This has run into a lot of opposition in the legislative system. They proposed a tax on marine diesel. The revenue would be used to fund harbors and ports. They proposed a two percent of the current gas tax on marine gas and redistribute that to deal with derelict and abandoned vessels.

The traffic congestion and freight mobility workgroup was an amazing discussion. Everyone throughout the state is affected by congestion. Going Dutch program – proposed a two percent excise tax on new vehicle purchases to be used for a pool of money to be dedicated to pay 50% of the cost of the metro congestion projects and the local jurisdictions would be in charge raising the other half of the money. They are starting to draft legislation that would change the nature of the MPOs across the state and give them taxing authority and the ability to levy taxes to come up with their part of the funding. They worked with ODOT to put together a spreadsheet that is a predictive tool that plotted the projects over ten years and the revenue generated by the excise tax. This is a doable proposal.

There have been discussions about the money needed for the maintenance and preservation. There is talk about fuel tax increases, registration fee increases, title fee increases, new vehicle excise tax, point of sale tax on bicycles, employee tax for transit, tolling on part of the congestion projects, and stair stepping the increases over the ten year lifespan of the plan.

The accountability workgroup is tasked with making sure that the citizens understand how the money is spent at all levels and what they are getting for the increased transportation funding. There has been a lot of discussion on ODOT's behalf. They have a model for an interactive website where people can click on specific areas and see the STIP projects and the Connect Oregon projects that are in process. Technical and financial information is available about each project. The local streets and roads reports are used by the counties and cities.

They are currently in the process of drafting bills around the recommendations of each of the workgroups. They expect these will be brought forward next week. A new joint committee for revenue was created. They will work on a package to deal with the state budget.

G. Farnsworth will forward the Oregonian article to the group.

S. Morgan anticipates that all of these issues will come at the end of the legislative session in July. A bunch of stuff will be drafted together. From a legislative perspective the ten year plan means they will take vote and not have to readdress it for five more sessions.

It was recommended that there be ODOT representation at the upcoming AOC meeting to provide an update. Senator Byer has been invited to speak at the transportation policy meeting.

Media coverage has been good.

5. I-84 Incidents/Events/Operations Planning-Pat Cimmiyotti, Joel McCarroll
Update was provided regarding the debrief for the train derailment incident. From Portland metro area to the Biggs bridge, several agencies are involved and must work together to manage incidents. The workgroup needs to focus on incident management, and road and weather management.

Per P. Cimmiyotti, a plan for incident response was not in place prior to the derailment. A workgroup has been created to address this matter. Team members are listed on the I-84/SR 14 Closure Working Group handout that was provided to those present (*available on ljdact.com*). The workgroup has analyzed the traffic on the corridor to determine where to detour during future incidents; refer to maps provided. The development of a communication plan is an important part of this project. The plans should be completed in time for the eclipse event in August 2017.

Short discussion followed regarding road closure times, protocols, and the importance of County/City Public Works incident notifications.

G. Farnsworth paraphrased the discussion and the information that was provided. He had several questions, including the following:
What is needed to make this plan work? What needs to be purchased? What needs to be implemented to make this plan work? More messages signs? Improved information gathering that can be used to communicate to customers or with each other? Do we have the stuff that is needed for 911 and dispatchers? Are there things that the LJDACT group can help support helping to find funding?

Eight portable message boards have been purchased and will be located throughout the detours. The need for permit signs at decision points has been recognized. This is in the works. Being able to communicate between the agencies is important.

G. Farnsworth directed the same questions to the WashDOT representatives.

There is a need for VMS boards and a better understanding of what is going to be done during an incident.

After incident discussions help identify what is needed in the future. The biggest thing that was acknowledged was that ODOT needs to be a major player in the Incident Command System. An inventory of available resources needs to be established and should include private vendors.

G. Farnsworth stated that there may be investments that can be made to help with this plan. He suggested keeping this matter on the agenda for future review.

6. Project Updates/Roundtable

Wasco County has a match agreement from the Federal Highway Administration that will be reviewed by the Board of Commissioners on Wednesday. This is for the two FLAP projects. The proposal is to combine the Ramsey Creek overlay and the Tygh Valley Wamic Market Road Safety Improvements into one project to be constructed in 2018. This was originally applied for in 2015.

R. Runyon encouraged other FLAP grant applicants to follow up and never assume someone is doing something with your applications.

Sherman County's FLAP grant is moving ahead.

Maintenance projects are being teamed up on US 30 from the roundabout out to almost Big Jim's. This is an inlay and redoing the guardrail along the old highway from the interchange out to the Feed Shack, and also addressing a drainage problem at the intersection by Big Jim's.

ODOT Project Development is working on the I-84 Mosier to The Dalles paving project. This is a holdover from last summer. They hope to have is substantially wrapped up by Memorial Day weekend. Had bid openings on the I-84 Three Mile Creek culvert replacement. The bridge that was built under The Dalles, the 15 miles of concrete pavement section will be finished up and the stream restored this summer. Also had a bid opening for the US30 bridges project – Mosier Creek, Dry Canyon Creek, and Chenoweth Creek. This is moving forward this summer. It will involve a full closure of the old highway at Chenoweth Creek on the west end of The Dalles for three weeks to occur sometime in late July or early August.

Wheeler County is working on a project at Rowe Creek to overlay and chip seal approximately 15 miles. This is to be started in August.

Gilliam County is doing maintenance. D. Kennedy is waiting to see what happens with the budget. They will be helping Wheeler County with the chip seal project.

Sherman County is not too happy with the chip seal contract. They are talking about holding off for a year to see if they can get a better price. The price they were given did not include the specs that they wanted. This will go out for re-bid.

Port of Arlington won a marine board grant to do some chip seal around the marina parking area and the roadway that leads to the grain elevator. Gilliam County will help with this project. Applied for the airport paving project but did not receive the grant. This is a high priority.

They are also working with UP and Waste Management to add an additional 10,000 feet of rail between Shutler Station and the Waste Management railyard. It is unclear if this will be a UP project or a Connect Oregon project. This will alleviate a lot of congestion in and around the railyard and improve efficiencies. There are 24,000 cars per year in and out of this site.

The Columbia Gorge Regional runway project is in the third week of the eight week project. This is the fourth and final phase. The paving should be done this weekend.

J. Bramlett introduced T. Conley as the new Transit Coordinator. J. Bramlett will retire June 1st but she will stay on for a few months as a temp to assist with the transition and special projects. T. Conley was previously managing the Albany Metropolitan Planning Organization.

One project that J. Bramlett would like to finish is the biennial distribution of transit funds. This year there will be between 400,000 and 500,000 to be distributed. The criteria will be reviewed and applications will be presented to the Steering Team.

Motion made by G. Farnsworth to appoint Peter Mitchell as the Lower John Day ACT representative on the Steering Committee, seconded by (??). Vote passed unanimously.

Kuddos were expressed for the funding that has been made available for transit.

The applications for the Transportation Growth Management program for region 4 are due by 4:00 pm June 9th. This program funds TSP updates – usually 2-3 projects per cycle for up to 300,000. They also fund the quick response program. Also available are education outreach, code assistance, and TSP assistance.

The City of The Dalles just completed their TSP update with adoption three weeks ago. This was funded by a TGM grant.

7. Next meeting set for August 7, 2017

Prepared by Brenda Snow Potter
Recording available upon request